

South Naknek Tribal Council

South Naknek Alaska, 99670

May 25, 2012

Dennis J. McLerran, Regional Administrator

Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900

Seattle, Washington 98101

Dear Mr. McLerran:

The EPA completed its watershed assessment for the Nushagak and Kvichak drainages on May 19th with the deadline for comments on July 24th, 2012. The comment period for such an important matter is insufficient and will prevent the South Naknek Tribe from meaningful participation in the public process. It is also presented at the beginning of summer, a time when most in our communities are focused on many other matters including subsistence activities.

The Tribe is situated in the headwaters of the Kvichak drainage and is in close proximity to the area that is being studied. We have a vested interest in having a meaningful dialogue with the EPA on a matter that can cause great duress with the Tribal members who rely on the area for their livelihood.

There were no public meetings in our community about the watershed assessment by the EPA. Now we are faced with having to rush to make comments without the benefit of learning what the full impact that the watershed assessment will have on our lives. This fast track appears to be disingenuous and not inclusive our needs. We are requesting that the deadline for public comment be extended to October, 2012. This would give our people, who are gathering and harvesting and away from home for the summer an opportunity to return home at the end of summer and devote the time and effort that this critical issue deserves. We are also requesting that the EPA conduct a meeting with our community in October. I thank you in advance.



Don Nielsen, President, South Naknek Tribe